

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

## 1. An ink cartridge comprising:

an ink accommodating portion operable to hold ink;  
an air passage operable to make said ink accommodating portion communicate with atmosphere; and

a valve mechanism, provided in said air passage, including an air-releasing valve member operable to seal a communication hole provided in a partition wall that separates an ink-accommodating-portion side, that is a side close to said ink accommodating portion, from an atmosphere side, that is a side close to said atmosphere, in a direction from said ink-accommodating-portion side to said atmosphere side, wherein

said air-releasing valve member has a contact portion operable to open said air passage by receiving an external force from said atmosphere side to said ink-accommodating-portion side.

2. An ink cartridge as claimed in claim 1, wherein said air passage includes a winding passage and a breathable filter that repels liquid in that order from said atmosphere, and

said valve mechanism is provided between said filter and said ink accommodating portion.

3. An ink cartridge as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a pressing member having an elastic force for pressing said air-releasing valve member in a direction from said ink-accommodating-portion side to said atmosphere side.

4. An ink cartridge as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a hammer operable to come into contact with said contact portion

of said air-releasing valve member to open said air passage, said hammer being pivotable around an axis.

5. An ink cartridge as claimed in claim 4, wherein said hammer pivots around said axis in a direction perpendicular to a mounting direction of said ink cartridge onto a recording apparatus.

6. An ink cartridge as claimed in claim 1, further comprising an air-releasing valve pressing member operable to move substantially in parallel to a mounting direction of said ink cartridge onto a recording apparatus, and

said contact portion is pressed by said air-releasing valve pressing member to open said air passage.

7. An ink cartridge as claimed in claim 6, wherein said air-releasing valve member has a projecting portion extending along said mounting direction of said ink cartridge onto said recording apparatus to project from said communication hole towards said atmosphere side, said projecting portion being formed to be pressed by said air-releasing valve pressing member.

8. An ink cartridge as claimed in claim 6, further comprising a pressing member having an elastic force for pressing said air-releasing valve member in a direction of said mounting direction of said ink cartridge onto said recording apparatus.

9. An ink cartridge as claimed in claim 4, wherein said contact portion is pressed by said hammer via a film.

10. An ink cartridge as claimed in claim 6, wherein a face of a room accommodating said air-releasing valve pressing member,

that is pressed against said recording apparatus, is sealed with a film.

11. A vacuum-packaging product comprising:

an ink cartridge as claimed in any one of the preceding claims; and

an outer packaging member operable to cover said ink cartridge, said outer packaging member being like a bag, wherein a pressure inside said outer packaging member is reduced to seal said ink cartridge.